The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XLV March 21, 1947 NUMBER 23

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THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and Catholic Bookman. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924 with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*
Published weekly and copyrighted 1947 in the U.S.A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. AShland 4-9685. Entered as second class matter February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canada $6 a year, Foreign $7. Single copies 15c.

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The Supreme Court and Mr. Lewis

IT IS regrettable that the American public as a whole is so ill-acquainted with the judicial and legal processes under which we live. Even some lawyers seem a bit shaky when it comes to broader questions. Thus the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* could properly remark, with reference to the recently adjudicated case of the coal strike injunctions, that "the allegedly smart Lewis relied on poor legal advice and was caught on false ground." Rarely has any judicial issue been more widely misunderstood, and hence rarely has there been a greater degree of public confusion over what took place.

There were, in fact, two questions at issue. First, did the Norris-La Guardia (anti-injunction) Act, or any similar legislation, apply when the parties involved were a union and the United States Government? We assume that the mine workers last October and November were employees of the Federal Government. Mr. Lewis legally contested this, yet as Chief Justice Vinson pointed out, Lewis himself on November 15 referred to the "400,000 men who now serve the Government of the United States in the bituminous coal mines." Second, regardless of whether any legislation applied, were Mr. Lewis and his miners properly in contempt, once an injunction had been issued, until this first point had been adjudicated?

The basic purpose of the injunctive power is to preserve the *status quo* until a matter has been finally adjudicated by a competent court, so that due process of law may have time to operate. Otherwise the enjoined action would have an opportunity to work a serious injustice or to forestall a just remedy.

To take a simple example: suppose a man is condemned to death and requests a writ of habeas corpus. Suppose a lower court denies such a writ. Suppose an appeal is then taken to the Supreme Court from this denial. The Supreme Court may then enjoin all further proceedings against the condemned man until such time as the appeal has been heard. Obviously the appeal would be useless were the man to be executed on schedule before th appeal had been heard. Chief Justice Vinson cited such a case in his decision regarding the miners. He went on to point out that if the Supreme Court had come to the conclusion that the condemned man's appeal did not lie in its jurisdiction, but that if, in the meantime, the man had met his death with the connivance of an official charged with his safekeeping, that official was still in contempt of court. Under our process of law, nothing should have been allowed to happen to the condemned man until the Supreme Court decided if it had jurisdiction, and if it did, until the appeal had been heard.

Here lies a most important safeguard for the orderly judicial process, for if some such safeguard did not exist, all sorts of chaos might result.

In the Lewis-UMW case, the Supreme Court ruled by a majority of 6-3 that the Norris-La Guardia Act did not apply to strikes against the Government. It further ruled, by a majority of 7-2, that both Lewis and the union were properly held in contempt of court. In a concurring opinion, Mr. Justice Frankfurter admirably sums up this aspect of the case: "To say that the authority of the court may be flouted during the time necessary to decide is to reject the requirements of the judicial process."

Our sympathies are very much on the side of organized labor when it comes to the question of protecting labor against the use of court injunctions as a weapon in breaking strikes. When we find the Government of the United States in such an operation as coal mining, it is to us a questionable policy to give the Government power to use injunctions in the solution of a labor dispute between it and a union. Clearly the decision of the Supreme Court indicates the necessity for a revision of the law in this connection, although probably the expiral of the President's war powers at the end of June will make the matter somewhat academic. The question of Mr. Lewis's

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and the UMW's contempt of court, however, is on a wholly different level. Either, as the *Post-Dispatch* indicates, Mr. Lewis was very badly advised, or his headstrong nature got the better of him. Certainly he did no service to our form of government by his actions last November.

The German Settlement

ALTHOUGH few American observers have expressed much hope that the Moscow conference itself would produce definitive treaty terms for defeated Germany, the announcement of the termination of Prussia's existence as a state on the very first day pointed to the wide scope of possible accomplishments. All that prevents the shaping of the main outlines of the treaty is the gulf between the German objectives of Britain, France, Russia and the United States—particularly between the Soviet and American objectives.

Weighing heaviest with the Russians immediately is their desire for reparations, for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of vast areas devastated by the Germans. The Soviets actually demand ten billion dollars worth of current German production. And it might be remarked in passing that this is a most curious application of the Marxian principle of "from each according to his ability . . ."

From the American viewpoint the principal economic objective is a speedy restoration of the Germany economy to a point where the Reich—and indeed Western Europe—become a going concern. Britain shares this view in general, while France tends to particularize the German problem to somewhat the same degree as the Russians, understandably fearful of a revived Germany and the danger of serving anew as a world battlefield.

The four-power, forty-year security pact which Secretary Marshall proposes goes straight to the one common goal of the conferees. Guaranteed demilitarization and disarmament, with four-power inspection teams and joint action in the case of a German menace would be of increasing importance in a world of rockets, stratosphere flying and bacteriological and atom weapons. Joint responsibility in this matter once wholeheartedly accepted would make other divergences less cataclysmic. The Marshall proposal is a strong opening move. A well-implemented, joint security pact would serve as a real beginning.

Otherwise the Moscow conference can be expected to produce little more than a stalemate. The opposition between the plan for a highly centralized Germany with Berlin as its capital and that for a federalized Germany emphasizing regional traditions might be resolved on some sort of compromise basis. Russia might even be granted some voice in the internationalized control of the industrial Ruhr; an acceptable German eastern boundary might finally be arrived at; even the relationships between the various German political parties and the Russia-sponsored Unity Party might be ironed out. It is in the economic arena that present Russian and American objectives appear irreconcilable.

The Russians appear bent on reparations from current production on a scale that would sink the Germans and the other peoples of Western Europe into hopeless poverty and dependency. And there are all too many indications that for the purposes of further westward expansion the Russians would actually welcome an irremediable German economic collapse. That is the very opposite of the American conception, not so much out of the desire to be freed from some of the heavy occupation costs but in the interest of a lasting peace settlement (which of necessity involves a genuine degree of worldwide prosperity).

Carry the analysis of the divergence further. Any such sums as the Russians want to pre-empt out of going German production could be provided only if they came ultimately from the United States—it might be done, for instance, if America contributed all the raw materials needed to produce the ten billions worth of products consigned to the demanding Russians. Months have passed since this country could be expected by the most optimistic of the Soviet leaders to agree to bolster the USSR in this fashion and at the same time to work so diametrically against American interests. The realists of the Kremlin undoubtedly realize that this huge reparation claim, too, is no more than another bargaining point, although indeed a major one. Firm in her adherence to effective joint policing of Germany for many years, the United States has to be irrevocably committed to a peace settlement aimed directly at the rehabilitation of the German and European economies. We must never agree to requisitions of plant or products or to political and/or economic barriers that would militate against this basic objective.

The Informer (a Revival)

ALTHOUGH it is probably too late to do them much good, the British in Palestine seem finally to be making an effort to reduce the emotional lead that the Zionist underground has maintained ever since the Palestine trouble became the subject—in the United States, at least—of full page newspaper advertisements. The British are not planning an international counter-advertising campaign intended to romanticize the personality and activities of the average British foot soldier now on duty in Palestine, but they have announced that, from now on, they will attempt, for the benefit of the world press, to lower the accomplishments of the Stern Gang and the Irgun to their proper criminal level. As an example of what they mean, the British have declared that they intend to discontinue their own contribution to Zionist underground story

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and song by eliminating from their official vocabulary the rather flattering and romantic word "terrorist."

The British suggestion is a good one, but it is not likely to catch on. Members of the Zionist underground have been the world's favorite murderers for such a long time now that the British will find it difficult to popularize, even among themselves, a police court vocabulary that is better suited to the doings of the Stern Gang and the Irgun.

The after-dark maneuvers of the Zionist underground have inspired very few ballads in England, but in this country their untidy murders have been presented (in spite of the protests of responsible Zionist organizations) as the most exalted form of political action. At the moment, the American public seems generally to regard the Stern Gang as a gay band of brigands who are up to something that is just a bit more daring and harmful than stealing apples from a notoriously ill-tempered landowner. This sentimental view of the Zionist underground is, of course, largely the result of activities sponsored by their admirers in this country, but some of the notion derives from the circumstances of recent world history and from the damp emotional inclinations of the American public. For the past seven or eight years the underground fighter has been presented as a hero, a concept which was accurate and useful during the war, but which has, unfortunately, educated American newspaper readers to believe that any one who opposes authority with demolitions and kidnappings must be a friend of freedom and right. With this preparation, it has been a fairly simple matter to convince Americans that the Stern Gang is a Middle Eastern version of the FFI. The Zionist underground has also managed, quite conveniently, to identify the adventures of its members with the legend of the Sinn Fein—an evocation which never fails to encourage, among some Americans, a rush of hot sympathetic tears.

As a result of these and other emotional aids, crimes of the Palestine extremists have become so effectively confused with the Zionist cause in general that it is now the habit, in the American press, to report the relations between the Zionist underground organizations and their local supporters in the most light and cheery fashion. Recently, when a ship which had been outfitted in the United States for use by the Palestine underground was forced back to Hampton Roads for repairs, the matter was noted in the papers with surprising calm and tolerance. Even the New York *Times* handled the story with unusual jauntiness, describing the ship as a trim little craft with an excellent war record. There was no suggestion that the ship had been outfitted for the use and comfort of murderers or that it represented an instance of the very thing that may make impossible a cool and peaceful settlement of the Palestine dispute. Instead, the idea seemed to be that, as soon as it was able to leave Hampton Roads, the ship would be off to the mouth of the River Liffey, where Victor McLaglen and a few genial friends would be waiting in the fog.

Discrimination Through Technicalities

ONE of the most shameful cases of discrimination still operative in our political democracy is the barring of Negro newspapermen from our congressional press galleries in Washington. Americans attacked for their inconsistency in racial matters, usually admit that there are local injustices. Discrimination is flagrant, we say, in certain sections of the South, stemming from a long tradition and based on fears of a Negro population predominance. The argument is that the South presents a special problem. Or, if we turn to the North, we seek to excuse the tragic confining of Negroes within certain well-specified city blocks in order to prevent losses in real estate values. Again a local problem. (The citing of these arguments is in no way intended to signify belief that they are justified.) But it is in the nation's capitol itself that Mr. Louis R. Lautier, correspondent of the Atlanta *Daily World*, has just been refused admission to congressional press galleries on a technicality! He protests to the Senate Rules Committee that "Negro correspondents are barred solely because of their race or color" and calls for the removal of "this gross discrimination against the Negro press." Surely this situation demands an awakening of the national conscience.

A Worthy Appeal

THE International Rescue and Relief Committee has spent fourteen years seeking to "save from extinction and to preserve for the future men and women of proven democratic loyalty, trade unionists, intellectuals, Spanish Republicans, men and women who ask nothing but an opportunity to live for themselves and the democratic ideal which they cherish." The Committee has carried on its efforts with a minimum of publicity and with fine success. As an affiliate of the National War Fund, it was freed from the task of raising money with which to carry on its activities. The National War Fund has ceased to exist, but there continue to be many, many thousands of persons in Europe desperately in need of the kind of help which the Committee can give. Among the distinguished persons whom the committee has saved from tyranny in Europe are the following: Marc Chagall, Wanda Landowska, Heinrich Mann, Herman Kesten, Joseph Wittlin, André Masson, Konrad Heiden, Jacques Hadamard, Jacques Lipschitz, Hans Habe, and Alfred Mendezabal. It is now appealing for funds, and in its appeal deserves the consideration of all generous Americans.

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The Jesuit Who Was Thursday

Villains: by Mrs. Trollope, Chesterton and Koestler

Evelyn Waugh

"SHE was neither clear-sighted nor accurate; and in her attempts to describe morals, manners, and even facts, was unable to avoid the pitfalls of exaggeration." Thus Anthony Trollope summarizes his mother's literary defects; her merits, he says, were "much creative power, with considerable humor and a genuine feeling for romance." These judgments occur in the posthumous *"Autobiography"* which shocked the esthetes of the eighties by its revelation of the methodical, matter-of-fact way in which he worked, but he was himself impressed by his mother's self-command and intensity of application. She began her literary career at the age of fifty and wrote regularly for twenty-six years. In that time she produced 114 volumes. She was indifferent to fame; self-expression came easier to her in the drawing-room than at the writing-table; the motive force was purely economic, the need to keep her home together, or rather to remake the series of homes which, one after another, were disintegrated by her improvident and unfortunate husband. Her best work was done by lamplight in the four hours before the little household was astir; after that hour her life became one of domestic drudgery lightened by such few intervals of social gaiety as circumstances allowed. Tragedy eased her circumstances; son and husband died. Anthony Trollope set up in the civil service; her daughter married comfortably; Mrs. Trollope moved to Florence in 1844 where, after this last of her many migrations, she remained firm until her death in 1863.

It was in the early years of this autumnal period that she wrote *"Father Eustace: a Tale of the Jesuits."* The three volumes were printed profusely enough at the time, but few sets seem to have survived the intervening century. It is a fortunate man who possesses one, for with a little judicious skipping it makes admirable entertainment read aloud in a devout household. The manner is more leisurely than is now the fashion, and the dialogue more rhetorical; there are *longueurs;* the descriptive passages abound in phrases that are now trite and cannot, I think, have been startlingly original at the time they were written, but the construction is sound and suspense is maintained.

The story opens with the words: "There are few spectacles more impressive than the deathbed of a Roman Catholic." Randolph de Morley, a wealthy Catholic layman of ancient family, is dying, and his conscience is troubled by one act in an otherwise blameless life. He had married a heretic, Lady Sarah Hartley, and, by a marriage contract not uncommon at the period, had agreed to bring up his sons in his faith, his daughters in their mother's. The property now devolves on their only child, the Protestant Juliana. This is no death-bed repentance; the last fifteen years or so of his life have been overclouded by an intolerable sense of guilt, which his confessor, the Jesuit Father Ambrose, has striven to aggravate, pointing out that only very large cash settlements can save him from hell and that the laws of entail make these unprocurable. For fifteen years Mr. de Morley has shut himself away from his neighbors and as far as possible from the wife and daughter whose presence are a continual reproach; now he has fretted himself into a premature death. Just as he dies, he reveals that he has a little something put by, a casket of jewels intended once for Lady Sarah, which he now confides to Father Ambrose. A painful scene follows the death, when Lady Sarah refuses the jewels which alone, Father Ambrose explains, can save her husband's soul. Juliana intervenes and secures the legacy for the Society. Presently the chaplain returns to Rome, after having been observed suspiciously lurking about a house which is to let in the parish.

Mother and daughter then set about making the acquaintance of their neighbors. So complete has been their exclusion from all social life that a huge new castle has sprung up without their knowledge within five miles of them, built by an improbably vulgar millionaire widow, and has become the center of local gaiety. There are three or four gentle families within their orbit, who are described with rich satirical detail. These provide both the comic relief of the tragedy and a substantial subplot.

Meanwhile we are taken to Rome, to the General of the Society of Jesus, Scaviatoli, a man of matchless guile, whose headquarters are approached through the back premises of a small tobacconist's shop. His multifarious, world-wide concerns do not prevent the General from indulg-

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ing an intense curiosity about every detail of Cuthbert Castle and its surroundings. Father Ambrose makes his report, and presently the eponymous hero is summoned from his convent for an interview. Father Eustace is a young priest of startling beauty and accomplishment; his singing voice is one of the finest in Europe; he can do everything but waltz, and his training in obedience is complete. On approaching his General he allows himself only one qualm; he rather hopes that he is not being briefed for a murder. Nor is he. His task is simple and comparatively honorable. He is to appear in the neighborhood of Cuthbert Castle in the guise of a Protestant layman, insinuate himself into Juliana's confidence, receive her into the Church, and propel her into a nunnery after first making her bequeath the castle and estates to the Society.

Accordingly, within a short time a captivating Mr. Stormont arrives as the new tenant of the house we have seen Father Ambrose reconnoiter. He is an immediate success with all the neighbors, with none more than with Juliana. He reveals to her that he is a Catholic, but not that he is a priest, and vanquishes her heart and theological prejudices by playing "a requiem" for her on the library organ. So powerful is the effect of the music that she swoons on the steps of the adjoining altar; while she lies, as he thinks, unconscious, he cannot restrain himself from kissing her and flies out into the night, distraught with shame, leaving her cosily content with her conquest.

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From this point the story takes on a blacker aspect. So far the superstitions and sensuous forms of the Catholic Church have been dealt with tolerantly. Father Eustace is represented as lovable; Mr. de Morley as kind and virtuous, driven into bigotry and melancholy in spite of his better inclinations; there is a likable crypto-Catholic in the house who has escaped Lady Sarah's purge of Catholic servants, in the important position of housekeeper and confidante; the architecture of Rome is well spoken of; even the evil General is seen through Father Eustace's trusting eyes rather than through those of the authoress. But now two stupendous villians are introduced.

The English Provincial of the time is represented as living in another part of the country under the name of Mr. Mills and under the guise of a small squire. Scaviatoli has given Eustace a letter to him, to summon him in case of need. This need arises acutely in the emotions roused by the kiss in the oratory. On receiving the call, Mr. Mills's first action is to visit a convent of enclosed nuns and, against the wishes of the Abbess, to extract an elderly, but greedy cousin of his, a Sister Agatha. Clad in the height of fashion, this lady accompanies him to stay at Eustace's house and to thicken the plot. The two immediately assert complete authority over the worried young priest, who does not fully realize the depth of passion he has stirred in Juliana. Mr. Mills is well aware of it and is confident that her broken heart, when she learns her lover's identity, will turn to the cloister for solace. In Juliana's mind all is now prepared for a happy consummation. Eustace, she is sure, refrains from a declaration for fear of her superior wealth. She determines to settle the matter by proposing herself. She does so, with shattering effect. An outburst of tears, a fierce embrace, a swoon on her part, flight on his. Father Eustace tells his superiors, whose treatment of him has become more insufferable daily, that he doubts the honesty of their plans. They scoff at him and reveal that it is purely for the purpose of breaking the heiress's heart that he has been selected. He cannot believe this of his reverend General, rushes to Rome, up the back stairs behind the tobacconist, along the dark passage to the General's door, and pop down an oubliette laid open to receive him.

Juliana's heart is irreparably broken, and by a happy chance she is enabled to lie beside Eustace in death under the same pall, for one day a broken man stumbles up to die at her feet, forgiven. It is Eustace, who did not die of his fall, but lived on in a convent where study and meditation convinced him of the falsity of the Romish faith. Scaviatoli was poisoned; Mr. Mills died naturally; it is expected that both will be canonized. So the book ends.

Absurdities abound; the priests are addressed indifferently as "Holy Father" and "Brother"; Mr. de Morley, owing to collateral descent from a former Pope, has the privilege of hearing Mass at midnight; when Mr. Mills finds himself in an heretic's library, "he looked around, beheld the records of all the various products of the unshackled mind of man. . . . He felt as if he were standing, plunged to the chin, in a cauldron of steaming heresy. Did he cross himself? No! Professional religionists of his class never do so when they are alone. But he ground his teeth." When Sister Agatha leaves her convent the reward offered her for success is the Abbess-ship of "one of the richest convents in all Italy." And so on. It is plain that Mrs. Trollope had no acquaintance, even of the kind which the most casual curiosity might have acquired, with the organization of the Society of Jesus. Nor does she need it. *"Father Eustace"* is not one of those books, popular in all ages, which purport to reveal the scandals of monastic life; her very ignorance renders her innocent of all blasphemy. Father Eustace, for example, is constantly writhing and sweating in an agony of prayer on the steps of his altar, but he never once says Mass or receives

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Communion. The story, too, is devoid of all the lubricious suggestions of intercourse between monks and nuns, priests and penitents, which are the staple of that kind of propaganda. On the contrary, she credits her Jesuits with the most exemplary discipline. It is the unnatural suppression rather than the indulgence of passion which shocks her. Sister Agatha's inordinate appetite for nuts, which is her undoing in the end, is the only sensual weakness imputed to the religious. Mrs. Trollope had no ulterior motive; she was simply a good-natured, hard-working woman in search of a plot which would seem plausible to the majority of her readers. She was a woman of much wider experience than most women novelists; her life had been anything but sheltered; she had traveled in America and Europe, and of late years had lived chiefly in Catholic countries. Did she suspect that her picture of Jesuit life was entirely fantastic?

I think not. She was the daughter of a clerical don, born in 1780, seven years after the Brief of Suppression which abolished the Society in all parts of the world except Russia. The records seized at the suppression, from which much had been expected to confirm the allegations, proved so disappointing that no use was ever made of them, but the original charges were still unrefuted at the time of Mrs. Trollope's education. She was already a married woman when Pius VII restored the Society. In 1829 Leo XII declared the Bull of Restoration to have force in England. Probably she heard some excited gossip at the time of this event. I suppose she never met a Jesuit in her life, but she may well have suspected that some of her neighbors were Jesuits in disguise; that belief was prevalent in England throughout most of the century and there were circumstantial stories going about that Puseyite curates had been recognized officiating at the Gesu in Rome.

Moreover the idea of secret societies was familiar to her at first hand. The home, or at least some of the homes, in which the young Trollope grew up had many affinities with the Rossetti household in Charlotte Street. (I suppose we shall never know more than we do already about Gabriele Rossetti, that imposing exile, rescued—why?—from arrest in Naples by the British Navy. Biographers of his children have tended to treat the father with an extreme levity. What was he up to, really, with his "mystical" researches? I venture to think he was a far nastier fellow than generally appears, involved in black magic possibly, in espionage of some sort probably, and that quite certainly he was the London agent of an anti-Christian secret society which had a determining part in the revolutionary movements of 1848.) In a minor way Mrs. Trollope had access to this same underworld, or rather, they had access to her. The modest hospitality of her home was always open to "patriot exiles" and "would-be regicides," and if she was not admitted to their secrets, she must at least have caught something of their habits of mind. It is usual for people to credit their enemies with the same methods and ambitions as their own. No doubt in her little salon there was plenty of talk about Jesuits. Her son describes her merely as "affecting a somewhat liberal rôle and professing an emotional dislike to tyrants," but anything she heard from these refugees from Catholic countries would only confirm the preconceived views of English Protestantism, so that when she required a secret society for her plot, it was natural enough that she should hit upon the Jesuits.

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This need for a secret society, indeed, is one that many story-tellers have felt before and after Mrs. Trollope. Most good stories are, in some fashion, the conflict between Good and Evil, and whereas it is easy enough to pile up virtues until some fairly plausible hero has been created, villains, however black the crimes attributed to them, tend to remain limp in their makers' hands. Iago is wicked, but the reasons he gives for his actions are so fatuous that few readers, offhand, can remember them. Bosola is the unwilling agent of men of diabolic character; it is impossible to take seriously their statement that they are impelled by avarice. And the Elizabethans were far nearer to the springs of Evil than Mrs. Trollope or Miss Agatha Christie.

The writers of detective stories, indeed, are in a peculiar difficulty. Their concern is with the mechanics of crime and the logic of its discovery, rather than with Good and Evil. But convention demands that the crime be murder. This is the accepted token-coin of extreme wickedness, yet it is one of the few sins which the civilized man can regard quite dispassionately. However misanthropic, he has never been tempted to its commission as he has been tempted, say, to adultery or suicide, and he recognizes, as perhaps he would do with other sins, could he regard them with equal coolness, that the dangers and exertions are appalling and the rewards trifling. Moreover conscience, silenced before more alluring transgressions, is here plainly audible, interposing its voice and debunking the tempter: murder for profit—"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"; murder for revenge—"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord"; murder for love—"Love suffereth long and is kind" . . .

Only writers like Mr. Graham Greene and M. Bernanos—how glibly the words come! What writers, in fact, are there like these two—who plumb the human spirit at depths where few venture, can create villains. More humble writers,

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who know they are qualified to deal only with rather ordinary characters, and who know that such people do not kill, are constrained, often, to exonerate their murderers either by inventing circumstances—blackmail, the threat of corruption of a loved one, etc.—in which the victim is an intolerable aggressor and his removal justifiable, in which case the forces of law are deprived of the reader's sympathy and only his intellect is engaged in the process of solution, or by borrowing from the psychologists. Schizophrenes, those rare and often harmless creatures, have become an accepted device of stage and fiction, such as identical twins were to an earlier age. The modern "psychological-thriller" has, properly, no villain, for the crimes are not acts of free will.

But there is a third resource, the group-villian —the gang, the spy-ring, the subversive organization, the secret society—which doubly commends itself to the critical reader, first by titivating the conspiracy-mania which is latent in most of us, and secondly by emphasizing the deep moral truth that men in association are capable of wickedness from which each individually would shrink.

The simplest case is the gang, the army of outlaws. Though there is a commercial "racket" at the origin of it and wads of "grands" disbursed, the essence of the gang, as it appears in fiction, is not the making of money, but an organized war against society; they take their orders, observe their own loyalties, and "shoot it out" with the police without hope of victory. In advance of this is the organization which aims not merely at an independent existence in a law-abiding universe, but at the actual subversion of the social and moral order.

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The conviction that such a conspiracy is feasible may be traced in history—for example in the Albigensian suppression and in the pogroms inflamed by the spurious "Protocols of the Elders of Zion." It is even more frequent in fiction. Conan Doyle, Agatha Christie, John Buchan, Francis Beeding, Edgar Wallace—almost every writer of crime stories has at one time or another made use of this expedient. The classic example, of course, is in Chesterton's *"The Man Who Was Thursday,"* only in that case, significantly, the whole thing turns out to be moonshine.

Significantly of Chesterton's character and age, Chesterton's cheerfulness was redeemed, but abundantly redeemed, from vulgarity only by his innocence. He was so sweet and virtuous a man that crime appeared to him as ingenious, schoolboy mischief and sin as something remote and palpably perverse, diabolic, scarcely human at all. Dr. Fu Manchu was his type of villain. And he lived in an age when it was possible to retain this purity untarnished. *"The Man Who Was Thursday"* ends in a great chase when the Common Men rise and take arms; it is thought in cosmic anarchy; it is discovered in defense of order and truth; and the dionysiac Sunday is revealed as the beaming, tutelary, Cheeryble Brother, god of the hearth. It is as though Mrs. Trollope had been taken to tea at Campion Hall and in an instant comprehended the true character of Jesuit training.

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Could Chesterton have written like that today, if he had lived to see the Common Man in arms, drab, gray and brown, the Storm Troopers and the Partisans, standard-bearers of the great popular movements of the century; had he lived to read in the evidence of the War Trials the sickening accumulation of brutality inflicted and condoned by common men, and seen, impassive on the bench, the agents of other criminals, vile, but free and triumphant?

Chesterton was the poetic and romantic child of a smug tradition. It is typical of his age and class that the dawn of sweetness and light in which are dissipated all the night-fears of *"The Man Who Was Thursday"* should be the discovery that the secret society, so long hated and dreaded, proves to comprise nothing but policemen. For Chesterton the police were the angelic hosts in action; the corpulent blue figure under the Kensington lamp-post represented Justice and Order and held his commission from the innate and inalienable sanctity of popular good sense. For half the world today "the police" are the Gestapo and the NKVD, and a very macabre parable might now be written of a poetic anarchist whose associates one by one unmask and reveal themselves as policemen, for *they* are the new secret society, so often foreseen in shadows, that conspires against the social and moral order.

It is a long road, in less than a hundred years from Mrs. Trollope's Jesuits to Mr. Koestler's communists, the one fanciful, the other grimly accurate, but there is a kinship between them, for both spring from a just appreciation of the Devil's strategy. He has too often been figured as the personal and private tempter offering largesse from the treasury of worldly goods at his disposal. But the gift which he offered Faust can be the membership of an eternally youthful party and the price he seeks in his contract may be the renunciation of free will and responsibility and the acceptance of an alien obedience. It is in association that souls may best be destroyed. It was this truth that Mrs. Trollope, for all that she was "neither clear-sighted nor accurate," nor able to avoid "the pitfalls of exaggeration," dimly and distortedly perceived.

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London's Woe

ALICE CURTAYNE

I AM JUST back from a week spent in London, having gone there in a mood that now seems to have been one of the gayest ignorance. Actually the visit resolved itself into an event which I am convinced was the most macabre experience of my life.

An Irish farmer's wife (with literary leanings, shall I say?) I left my own environment very discontented with its rusticity and thirsting chiefly for conversation. It seemed to me that I had been vegetating during the closed period of the war when communications were severed. . . . How pleasant it would be to talk again of trends and tendencies, writers and their books. . . . I should digress here to explain that on Irish farms there was never any real food scarcity during the war. Thus we were always able to guide our lives placidly according to the Biblical scale of values, "Not by bread alone . . ." At our family table the mention of food is taboo on the grounds that if the children are ever to acquire the art of conversation, they must learn early how to select a topic. Lapses into the forbidden area of discussion are greeted with jeers: *Oh, food, food!* The member of our family most rigid in maintaining the taboo is aged four and a half.

Think of the shock, then, of emerging from this intimate family circle and finding in the great world of literary and artistic endeavor absolutely nothing discussed but food. As I write, I have a mental image of millions of people, intellectual, artistic, striving minds, all preoccupied with one single theme, food. The trouble is that the British rationing system, as at present operated, does not allow sufficient food to any given individual for his adequate sustenance, and far less does it allow for extending any of it to visitors, or to meet the demands of those numerous types of illness not serious enough to be helped out by a doctor's certificate. The British, then, are called upon to exercise to the utmost their immemorial genius for contriving: ferreting out every day in the food shops those items that are "off points"; swopping; arranging to get a parcel from here and a parcel from there. Those parcels and the endless humiliating preoccupation with them! After a few days in London I began to see in my mind's eye millions of pairs of hands, especially women's hands, clutching and greedily opening those wretched and often greasy little wrappings of food, some of them containing no more than perhaps four sausages (red, inferior beef sausages at that), or a couple of pounds of blackish meat, or a tin of spam, some oddment anyhow which is an addition to that allowed on points. Or another impression is that of a vast lunatic asylum in which all the inmates have the same type of mental alienation: food—famine; famine—food. Only it is hardly a mass hallucination because the man in the street seems to be convinced that there are now no reserves of food in Britain.

I was the guest of a woman friend in her small service flat. She is one of the most complete characters I have ever known and such a fount of spontaneous humor that to live with her is a tonic. One evening she returned to the flat from a food forage, saying with suppressed glee: "You'll never guess what I've got; you'll simply never guess!" After many such gambits to arouse my curiosity and, later, my felicitations, she produced two eggs—Danish ones. She sank into a chair and gloatingly examined them, explaining that the only eggs she had been using for the past few years had been dried eggs. She was so happy to have this unique delicacy to offer me that fortunately I bit back the comment which rose to my lips: "No countrywoman in Ireland would eat a Danish egg, not even for a bribe!"

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How I wish I could write that this preoccupation with food is confined only to housewives. Men everywhere, so far as I could see, in all positions, were just as badly affected. I had lunch with a publisher one day, and to my pleasure he began to expound on a theme that to me is full of interest: Belloc's service to the Catholic Church. I listened gratefully, thinking "What a relief, what a blessed relief, to get away from it for half an hour." A pause: my mind was lingering lovingly on one of Belloc's earliest books, "Avril," when my companion suddenly said, "I have a secret for you." "Oh?" "We got two pounds of sugar from America this morning." I looked at him somberly and again my unspoken comment was: this is how an Empire falls.

Two things were said to me over and over again: first, that defeat would have been better. This pessimistic conclusion was sustained with a hard and bitter logic. Secondly, that the worst is yet to come: "We still have to touch rock-bottom." This identical phrase was used to me three times in one day: by a taxi-driver as we bumped along a Surrey lane through the snow; in a letter which was awaiting me in the flat from a Dominican nun in the north of England; by another friend whom I revisited that evening. Who could not be impressed by such unanimity?

Of course the cold rendered the food scarcity much more acute, as the general resistance was so lowered. The use of electricity is prohibited every day between the hours of nine and twelve, and again between two and four. (On the other hand, there are no night restrictions and cocktail parties in electrically heated rooms may go on all night.) Moreover, coal and coke are so scarce that cen-

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tral heating either avails no more than just to take the chill off the radiators, or it has had to cease altogether, and the supply of hot water has had to be cut off from most service flats. The fuel shortage makes the gas pressure very low. In a flat in the west end of London, I saw a friend trying to light his gas fire, running a match repeatedly up and down it before even a faint glow could be got in response. Nearly all the people are cold and they walk in darkness. This is fearfully hard on elderly people and sick people. I got glimpses of lives that are just days of anguish.

A situation can best be conveyed by means of episodes. I went to the Catholic Evidence Guild pitch in Hyde Park, always a rallying-point of interest—and even gaiety—for Catholics passing through London. A speaker got up and hopelessly addressed for a few moments the emptiness around the platforms. There was not a single person lingering on that expanse of frozen slush. It was quite impossible to gather a crowd, or form a meeting. Is it the first time in Guild history that this has been the case? The speakers told me that during the war years, Hyde Park Corner never presented such emptiness. At least one platform would always have its nucleus of a crowd, despite the air-raids, food scarcity, black-out and bad weather. No single one of those miseries, or the combination of all of them, could so wipe out this famous center of open-air debate. Then what has banished the people now? A combination of all the above discomforts combined with a nameless fear. I think that perhaps hardly anything in London is so symptomatic at the moment as the emptiness around the platforms in Hyde Park.

One forenoon I went to buy a hat at Bourne & Hollingworth's. There was a thick fog in the city to accentuate the evil conditions. This famous shopping center of the bourgeoisie, always a bright, busy place, was no longer recognizable. The different departments were like echoing caverns of gloom, full of fog, through which a few candles stuck in saucers glimmered wanly. The assistants, wrapped in their heaviest outdoor clothes and even in gloves, stamped about in a hopeless kind of resignation. They were polite but clearly their main preoccupation was how to endure. The hats were piled up on tables near windows and a few determined shoppers were turning them over and peering at them. In those large buildings designed for steam-heating, there are strange effects when the heat and light are withdrawn. The floors caught my attention, all damp and some slushy. I saw no street-gangs clearing the streets. The wet brought into such shops on pedestrians' feet cannot dry off and accumulates from day to day. One wonders if those buildings will ever be put right again. The atmosphere of ghostly unreality was too much for me. I lost interest in the hat.

There is a fraternization, a spirit of *camaraderie* among the people much more intimate now than even in the war years. That cold crust of English reserve is broken under the impact of hardship. People talk freely to one another in trains and buses. They may begin with the morning news, but immediately they pass on to a discussion of their individual problems, and always in this outpouring of unsolicited confidences there is an anguished seeking for reassurance in an unspoken query: "Can we last out? What will the end be?" One day I lunched alone in a Baker Street restaurant. Soon another vacant seat at the table was taken by a woman, typically English with her air of quiet efficiency and her hard, brittle way of talking. Before she left the table, she had told me her whole family circumstances and her most intimate domestic problems.

The faces of those Londoners begin to haunt the stranger after a few days among them: battered, tired faces, gray, lined, prematurely aged, stamped with endurance, sorrowfully expectant, apprehensive. I happened to be burdened that week with a heavy cold and a cough which night after night made sleep impossible. One morning, looking sourly into the glass at my haggard visage and red-rimmed eyes, I was suddenly inspired to be glad of the damaged appearance. "At any rate," I told myself, "in looking like one of them, I am artistically correct. I *compose* now with this background. Better look like one of themselves." Indeed it would seem a sort of spiritual affront to go about London with a well-fed air and a rubicund, jolly look.

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The demoralization of workers is complete. They don't want to put forward any effort; they all seem to be waiting around for something undefined to happen. I saw repair gangs in the street standing about, or unashamedly lolling. One day I was strolling up and down a quiet suburban road for ten minutes or so, waiting for a friend. A group of workmen were erecting a shed in the yard of one of the large private houses. As I waited around outside, three different men came to the gate within the ten minutes to ask me the time. All householders whom I met were full of anecdotes of the extraordinary difficulty they found in getting any sort of job done with any degree of satisfaction. Very little bomb damage has yet been cleared off the face of London.

Another detail that most forced home on my consciousness this demoralization was a *minestrone* soup. It was offered to me in a restaurant that used to be world-famous as catering for gourmets. With some knowledge of cooking myself, I know that this soup is simple to make and very good. But this was quite horrifyingly

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bad, just tasteless brown water on top of a few mushy diced carrots and turnips. How any cook, man or woman, could ladle out this horrible liquid as soup and get away with it in regard to either management or clientèle was simply mystifying. Then the lights were put out at two o'clock and candles in ashtrays were substituted. In that darkened scene, one's spirits sank.

I was told that buying dollars is the chief preoccupation of the rich in England today, and *Where can I get dollar credits?* their never-ending concern. There is an exodus of all those in a position to leave the country, chiefly to the continent and to Ireland. Some commentators speak in bitter terms of "rats leaving the sinking ship," but that which one deplores is the dispiriting effect of all this activity on the great majority who have to remain in England.

There is everywhere present an extraordinary sense of frustration; it is an atmosphere in which no constructive effort seems possible. The "points" and "coupons" system, so narrowly calculated and rigidly applied, seems to make it impossible to buy anything except sheer necessities. No one seems to be doing anything constructive. All enterprise is blocked by barriers of licenses, permits, delays and exasperations. There is a paralysis of initiative.

Toward the end of my week in London, I traveled down into Surrey to visit a friend. It was one of the worst days in this "worst winter for a hundred years." Hurrying to Victoria, I was caught in a snow blizzard. Out of a livid, plum-colored sky, huge snowflakes were driven by an icy wind, flogging the empty streets and fleecing around corners in spectacular spirals. The windows of the train were obscured by flying wads of snow. I opened the newspapers and read grim headlines telling the people to suffer on, suffer on. What is it all about? Here are a people who have already suffered for eight years, but now with the difference that they have no patriotic idea to sustain them. How much longer can they endure?

Returning to London next day, the elements were quieter, but the heavy fall of snow muffled all the landscape in a kind of watching silence. The taxi-driver at Holmwood told me that there was no coal in that part of Surrey and that they were cutting down all the trees on the common for fuel—the Duke of Norfolk's trees. I asked him did no one make a move to prevent it and he answered simply: "We are all together in this. We must have fires."

I peered out of the carriage windows at the shrouded land, where occasionally a few dark figures were seen striving against the snow. The air was full of tension, of a sense of foreboding. I seemed to see silent millions in this country watching, waiting, listening. Suddenly I knew that I had been permitted for an instant to take part in a terrific drama, a cataclysm of empire.

Communications

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: Your editorial (February 28, 1947) on federal aid for teachers refers to "imperfections" in the Taft Bill and implies that Catholic educators should withdraw their opposition to the measure because of "the national necessity" for federal aid. I agree fully with THE COMMONWEAL'S recommendation that federal aid be granted immediately for the relief of the desperately needy schools in the South, and furthermore I have not yet ceased to admire THE COMMONWEAL'S courage of some years ago in insisting that opposition to federal aid because of the danger of federal control was *not* a wise or prudent policy for Catholic educators.

True, Mr. Taft's bill has many commendable features; it is conservative; it confines aid to the needy States; and it guarantees an equitable distribution of the funds for the separate Negro schools. But to say that its provision for nonpublic schools is only an "imperfection" is, I fear, an egregious over-simplification of one of the most controversial issues in American politics.

Let's first look at this imperfection and then analyze the reasons why the sponsors of the bill and its supporters have insisted upon the retention of this imperfection even though it means the defeat of the whole bill.

The Taft measure permits a State to spend a portion of its federal allotment for nonpublic schools provided it spends a corresponding amount of state and local funds for the same purpose. So, it is claimed that Catholic schools have a "right" to federal funds provided the States amend their constitutions and their legislatures authorize grants of public funds to the parochial schools. That's about the same as politely telling a Negro in Mississippi that he has a "right" to vote if he can persuade the legislature to repeal the poll tax.

Why has Senator Taft retained this objectionable feature in his bill despite the protests of Catholic educators and despite the bipartisan recommendation from ex-Senator Walsh, Senators Murray, Aiken and Morse that the bill be corrected by a simple amendment which would guarantee a fair distribution of funds between public and nonpublic schools? (Incidentally, THE COMMONWEAL has high editorial praise for this "Separate Statement of Views," which also has had the courageous and militant support of the A. F. of L. and the American Federation of Teachers.)

Senator Taft's record certainly speaks for itself. He is quoted in *Collier's* (February 28, 1947) as saying with approval, "We have long socialized primary and secondary education." And during the debate on the hospital construction bill the Senator said that he favored federal aid for private hospitals, but opposed it for private schools "because the State has undertaken to educate every child." The Senator's position, which is fully supported by the National Education Association, primarily regards the nonpublic schools as a "needless duplication" (the Senator's expression, not mine) of the country's public schools.

Of course, these ideological niceties as to who has the primary right in education and as to what extent the

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government should run the nation's schools are of little interest to sixty or more youngsters huddled around a pot-bellied stove in a shack of a schoolhouse staffed by a $900 a year semi-literate teacher. Hence, the temptation to pull out of the controversy on federal aid is hard to resist, especially in liberal circles where the critics of the Church grab every opportunity to accuse Catholics of being reactionary obstructionists.

The one compelling reason for fighting a last-ditch battle for federal aid to parochial schools is the dogged, unrelenting and insidious efforts of some public school organizations to reinforce the intrenched position of public schools by forcing the Federal Government to treat the parochial schools as second-class institutions which are to be tolerated but are not to be encouraged. For a typical public school outburst take Doctor Childs's remarks at the Atlantic City meeting of the School Administrators. After charging that the Catholic Church was blocking federal aid, he said: "One may hope that American Catholics may sense the problem their present educational politics are creating. . . . Even should they decide that they must continue their present system of private schools, it is to be hoped that they will wholeheartedly cooperate to see that public education is not made to suffer as it seeks to meet the needs . . . of youth at this time."

The "imperfection" in the Taft Bill is a carefully designed discrimination. I don't see how it can be tolerated no matter what happens to the bill.

REV. WILLIAM E. MCMANUS.

The Stage & Screen

The Importance Of Being Earnest

JOHN GIELGUD'S production of the second Wilde of the season verges on perfect, I think: as elegant and balanced as Cecil Beaton's "Lady Windermere" is gaudy. And it is presented surely, without any lapse into parody. I don't suppose there is anyone to whom the title of this piece will not immediately recall its fable, its absurd moral. As an exercise in wit, it is clearly one of the plainest examples in the history of the medium. No matter how sophisticated, or artificial, or *contrived* as characters witty people may be, it is a truism that they must be the best listeners in the world. It is fascinating, leafing through this book, to watch how the key word (idea-word) in each portion of the dialogue is seized, turned and re-turned by the listener, only to be re-seized, re-turned again, re-shaped and again let fall by the first, or third, or fourth participant. Of course, *what* such people are willing to listen *to* is a crucial point, and marks perhaps the chiefest difference between this author and his contemporary Irish "brilliantine." "'Brilliancy' was my specialty," Shaw wrote in 1898, three years after this play's première, six years after his own. It is strange to realize that in Dublin, in '56, in October when Wilde was born, G.B.S. was already two months and two weeks old!

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What an audience will listen to is also crucial. Nowadays in this country, we are, I think, fairly surfeited on what is known as the wise CRACK, a single blow calculated to produce no return at all, saving roars from the house. With Shaw there is, of course, considerable speechifying. With Wilde, it is sentences — polished, pointed, punctuated and cumulative. And I may say the roars at the Royale the other evening (in an atmosphere of barely bated delight) were among the mightiest I have ever heard. With Congreve (I am sorry to appear chauvinistic—they *are* all Irish and akin) who is next on the Gielgud list, the rhetoric changes again, and it will be as interesting then, I think, to compare the spectators as well as the play and players.

But to return to the production, I feel there is one astonishment: the casting. There are, strictly speaking, no characters walking these lines. There are personalized titles—the young men about town, the young girl who is not yet "out," the young lady who is—all of whose idiom is precisely the same. However, there is a certain differerce to be felt, in the reading, between the two "Earnests," Jack and Algy. The former is surely the more open and airy, simpler creature. And he is more surely the hero. Reading the business, I was considerably puzzled as to which part (from which corner) Mr. Gielgud would deliver his wonderfully timed, passionately icy, customarily artful attack. A natural Algy, would he undertake Jack? He did, and does. And opposing to himself the frank, charming, only more tender talents of Robert Flemyng, one finds, as I have said, Wilde's original balance to hold: exactly in reverse. Ostensibly, it is impossible to hazard an opinion concerning the author's opinion of this remarkable switch; but I feel somehow he would be as enchanted and intrigued as indeed I was, and all those around me. Aside from this honest, and therefore pedestrian, observation, Mr. Gielgud's choice of people unquestionably honors him, both as director and fellow worker. The wonderful Margaret Rutherford's untiring Lady Bracknell; Pamela Brown's exquisitely arch Gwendolyn; Jane Baxter's exquisitely sensible Cecily; Jean Cadell's dreaming Prism; John Kidd's droning Chasuble; Richard Wordsworth's sure Lane; and Stringer Davis's and Donald Bain's down-the-nose servants—all, singularly and plurally, support the script rather than themselves. This is all-star, not star stuff.

In spite of such a list, I still feel the first of the overall excellencies must go down as the director's choice of sets. Designed by the Motley firm, who have been known on this side to succumb to gigantica, the three mountings are worn, neat, authentic, startlingly playable. England being poor now, her artists must be everywhere enjoying the freedom of substituting style for money. As grateful as one is to the Guild and John C. Wilson for the fact of the production, one wishes they might learn, as well as earn, from this importation. Further, Mr. Gielgud lists not only his designer, but William Conway, his light-man, and himself as stage man, *after* his cast sheet, so that each of the emphases in the business was right.

Is there anything else? Yes, music arranged by Leslie Bridgewater. I liked that, too. (*At the Royale.*)

Yellow Jack

NOT THE least interesting of the press exchanges being conducted around and about the American Repertory Theater will be a letter criticizing its choice of repertory in the Times's "Drama Mailbag." In respect of the organization's first American offering, the communication demanded to know whether the Sidney Howard piece was . . . "more . . . [than] . . . a good enough play . . . fifteen years ago . . ." The question was subsequently, and vigorously and variously, answered in the same pages. But I confess I think Margaret Mellinger, the writer, had a stern point. A good deal of money, a good deal of passion, and an enormous amount of sentiment has accompanied the Le Gallienne-Webster-Crawford attempt to *broadway* the repertory scheme. In their presentation of one shambling Shakespeare, one excellent Ibsen, one shining Shaw, and one ordinary Barrie, their record is honorable. But the size of their planning utterly precludes experimentation. I think the selection of Mr. Howard's piece at this moment not only presupposes an experimental attack, but also uncovers shaky showmanship. In the mentioned fifteen years, we have had not only analogous plays and analogous movies, but more, we have had the second part of the War with attendant medical marvels, not less historically important than Mr. Howard's examination of yellow fever, but simply closer—more intimately important. The play is one of subject, and its subject has been equalled, if not surpassed by events. It is neither technically, nor esthetically, nor philosophically a document. Played—as it is here—with at most, competence; at worst, a horrifying arrangement of dialect; and woefully, pretentiously, over-directed; it is a limping uneven experience in theater. One wishes that its producers could become, in their reorganization, somehow architecturally and promotionally smaller and simpler, so that they might rely upon discovery as well as revival for their potential company. (*At the International.*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

For You and You and You

VARIETY is the spice of this week's program, which aims to offer something for everyone. For the realist, and especially those moviegoers who resent the usual slickness of a Hollywood production, there is *"Boomerang,"* an excellent film whose script, written by Richard Murphy, is based on an unsolved murder that actually took place in Connecticut. This is not so much a murder mystery as it is a story of the ways of justice in a small American city. Its citizens rose in indignation when the police failed to locate the man who shot and killed a much-loved minister. The local newspaper took up their cry for action and soon the case involved not only the present office holders but also the contenders in coming elections. The manhunt becomes hysterical, and finally one obvious suspect (Arthur Kennedy) is dragged in and questioned relentlessly until he confesses. Then at the trial, the state's attorney (Dana Andrews), who has been suggested for governor and who realizes the political danger of his contention, announces that he believes this man innocent. How he proves his point and

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saves the man he was supposed to prosecute makes thrilling cinema. Besides its social content, "Boomerang" rates applause for the good direction of Elia Kazan and the sincere production of Louis de Rochemont, who again puts the factual March-of-Time technique to advantageous use in a feature film. The realistic shots of Stamford, Conn., the people on the streets, and the cast itself (which also includes such fine players as Jane Wyatt, Lee Cobb, Sam Levene—and many others in small rôles), the straightforward script and the unusual plot add up to make a fascinating movie that has something to say and says it intelligently.

Moviegoers who prefer less realism and more emotion in their films will find fare to their liking in *"The Years Between,"* an English picture with a modernized version of the Enoch Arden theme. The wife (Valerie Hobson) becomes a member of Parliament after her husband's death is reported; and on the day of her marriage to a neighboring farmer (James McKechnie) her husband returns—not from "death" but from underground work in which the report of his death was part of a plan. Naturally this man expects to resume his old position with his family and in politics. But his wife resents not having known of his planned "death," she resents the suffering through which she went, and his lack of understanding about what happened during the years of his absence. Although Compton Bennett's direction of this script (based on the play by Daphne Du Maurier) moves at snail's pace, the acting and characterizations are good—especially that of Michael Redgrave as the returning husband who thinks that things should be as they were when he left. As the housekeeper, Flora Robson has some of the film's best lines, particularly when she tells off the husband and wife with a few sound observations on which values are changing and which will remain the same. Anyone who enjoys a leisurely English movie decorated with lovely scenery and knotty problems should enjoy the long slow "Years Between."

More spritely, but less absorbing in story is *"Blaze of Noon,"* an American film that spoils its realistic background material (early days of the Air Mail) with an ineffectual plot. The shots of flying during the pioneering days of the 1920s are thrilling; and we are impressed with the dangers through which these heroic flyers went in order to establish a service which we now take as a matter of fact. I'm sorry, however, that producer Robert Fellows and director John Farrow allowed this story to clutter up the excitement. It mainly concerns four brothers (William Holden, Sterling Hayden, Sonny Tufts, Johnny Sands) the first of whom marries a nurse (Anne Baxter) who rightfully resents the informal living arrangements. Tragedy changes the cheerful camaraderie, but the story's pattern is so obvious that one loses interest in the characters. At times William Bendix and Howard Da Silva manage to brighten the plot that sags with four brothers and their little wife. And the whole picture is curiously without suspense in spite of its full share of stunt flying, storms, accidents and sudden death.

Since *"Song of Scheherazade"* makes no pretense at realism, it is foolish to consider it any more seriously than a musical comedy—which is what it is. Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakoff (played by Jean Pierre Aumont with flashing teeth and other juvenile-lead features) appears as a cadet on a Russian training ship in 1865. He is inspired by Yvonne De Carlo to compose the title number to which she later dances and dances. Director Walter Reisch further treats us to more humor put over by Eve Arden and Brian Donlevy, Charles Kullman's singing of several Rimsky-Korsakoff songs and some gala technicolor. You have seen and heard worse on the stage many times.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

The Soil and Health. Sir Albert Howard. Devin-Adair. $4.00.

STEEL AND CONCRETE, machines and traffic, factories and Gimbels, juke-boxes and neon lights—modern life is pretty far removed from the soil. Even from the sizzling steak, the almond parfait, and woolen tweeds, it's a long way to the sheep in the meadow, the cow in the corn and the compost heap. The philosophers, too, are nearly as far away. They perceive the hierarchy: earth, plants, animals and, at the top in the same place urban civilization places him, man. It takes humility to realize with the peasant that in the order of necessity it is the other way around. Man cannot live without animals (G.B.S. notwithstanding). Animals cannot live without plants. Plants cannot live without soil. The soil is basic

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among living things. Though man has the most precarious position in this "wheel of life," he is the most dangerous being of the cycle. "The hunger of the urban population and the hunger of the machines has become inordinate," laments Sir Albert Howard. "The using up of fertility is a transfer of past capital and of future possibilities to enrich a dishonest present; it is banditry pure and simple."

Sir Albert thinks we are already paying the penalty for mining the soil through the increase of disease. His thesis is that Nature meant all of her forms of life to be healthy, provided they have suitable diets. If the health of the soil is bad, the health of the plants which live from it, of the animals which live from the plants, and of man who lives from both—all will be bad. To establish this principle Sir Albert records in "The Soil and Health" the story of his half-century of experiments with the diseases of all the principal crops and animals. He brings testimony, also, from every continent and climatic zone through the reports of users of his methods for preserving soil health. Diseases in coffee, sugar-cane, cotton, wheat and fruits, foot-and-mouth disease and contagious abortion in animals, the tendency of strains to weaken or become sterile—all these and many more ills cleared up without benefit of insecticides, fungicides, artificial fertilizers or medicines when the fertility of the soil was restored by organic manuring. The explanation, he believes, is in proteins: "If these are properly synthesized in the plant, their disease-resisting powers first protect the crop and are afterwards duly handed on to the animal and to man. . . . Soil fertility is the basis of the public health system of the future."

The connection between healthy soil and immunity to disease has been upheld before by, among others, Drs. McCarrison and Wrench in England, but it is doubtful if anyone can equal the evidence that Sir Albert has accumulated. The average person is in no position to judge. He can only observe that Sir Albert Howard has challenged the whole basis of modern pathology with its intense specialization on the specific ill. Widespread research is called for, but one would be extremely optimistic to think that Sir Albert Howard is going to be hailed as the new prophet by the Department of Agriculture, the American Medical Association or the Public Health Service—the only agencies with sufficient resources to test his theory. Almost without exception we measure progress in "health" by the new techniques on the operating table or in psychiatry; thoughts about the soil are confined to giving the patient "The Egg and I" to read.

In describing what makes a healthy soil Sir Albert returns to the theme of his previous work, "An Agricultural Testament." Organic matter or humus "is the most significant of all Nature's reserves." He continues his spirited attack on those who would maintain fertility with artificial (NPK) manures. Yet after his lengthy denunciation of the "intrusion of science" he cautiously suggests that "to obtain the very best results we must replace simultaneously the organic *and* the mineral portions of the soil." An expansion of this point would put an end to the controversy between the organic and chemical fertilizer schools, both of which have trapped themselves in an either-or mentality. There is also room for questioning Sir Albert's conviction that the only method of restoring humus is by the Indore Process of composting. Other methods have certainly been followed with success in the United States.

EMERSON HYNES.

Web of Lucifer. Maurice Samuel. Knopf. $3.00.

THE WEB OF LUCIFER was impressively woven around the days and ways of Italy in the time of the Borgias. Ferdinand Gregorovius, the historian, wrote in 1874 of the period—and it is quoted in a note in the beginning of this book: "If we could take a man such as our civilization now produces, and transfer him into the Renaissance, the daily brutality which made no impression on the men of that age would shatter his nervous system and probably upset his reason."

Out of such a period has the author woven a brilliant background for his novel of behavior—a panorama depicting the times and the mood and tone of society as Cesare Borgia moved across the face of Italy—the demigod of the hundred masks, Machiavelli's "Prince" in action.

At his feet fell one Giacomo Orso, a bright peasant boy from the farming lands of the Romagna who rose to be his trusted clerk and courtier and to use the Latin taught him by a country priest to no good purpose. The book is simple in intent—the issue being the saving of the soul of Giacomo. He is the prodigal son tempted by revenge and the lure of the world—struggling in his conscience with the principle that the end justifies the means. The whole weight of the book and consuming interest of the author, to the detriment of the dimension of his characters, is directed toward this moral apsect. There are long discourses between Machiavelli and Giacomo. The author is more interested in analyzing than creating and the characters, as a result, are not as important as the ideas they stand for. Giacomo is but an instrument, a case history. Judging the work as a piece of art this is a fault, of course. But one seldom judges novels from that viewpoint these days. And behavior is interesting, too.

Of the book as a whole one might say that it is intelligent—an adjective that may seem curious but is somehow apt. Competent, cool, honest—and intelligent.

ANN HUNTER.

The Dark Side of the Moon. With a preface by T. S. Eliot. Scribners. $2.75.

I SUPPOSE the story of what happened to hundreds of thousands of Poles in the Soviet Union during the tragic years 1939-1944 seems fairly remote to some Americans. Of this anonymous work T. S. Eliot in his preface states that "the book as a whole is a document for the study of the methods of destroying a culture, one pattern of life, and imposing another pattern." And this by the power of what Eliot calls "planned ignorance." Perhaps that is where the real danger lies for us, and perhaps that is why we Americans can ill afford to claim that we are unconcerned.

How was this destruction accomplished? The question will be answered for you gradually as you start to read of those trains carrying human misery eastward, ever eastward, to prison, "free exile," or lagier. ("Nobody leaves lagier behind. Lagier is for ever"). You will learn about conditions in those penal camps where food is doled out by the "kettle" system, work hours excessive, hospital facilities primitive or non-existent, where crawling things abound. Where? Vladivostok—with 25,000 prisoners camped in the open (2 barracks reserved for Poles); Archangel in the Komi Republic (for timber work); or the grey sea of Obhotsk for dreary labor in

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the fish canneries. Almost anywhere will do in that vast area where there are "abysses of space—chasms into which millions of lives may be cast without awakening any more echo than the rolling of a stone into a gulf."

The publishers have added an epilogue (written by an Englishman), to enable readers to co-relate events described in the book with contemporaneous history being made in London, Moscow, Warsaw, etc. What is described in this section simply serves as additional evidence of the apparent success of the attempt "to impose another pattern" by the awesome power of "planned ignorance."

GREGORY SMITH.

Palladian. Elizabeth Taylor. Knopf. $2.50.

ELIZABETH TAYLOR'S second novel, "Palladian," is written in what might be called the English manor-house convention. Its action proceeds through the development and intensification of the "atmosphere" surrounding a house (the classic is "Wuthering Heights," and the most conspicuous recent example is "Rebecca"); its resolution is in the visitation of innocence upon the obscurely known evil, light dispelling the darkness. Here it is a little governess who comes to a country-house and little by little, by, one takes it, trust and love, loosens the evil hold of the dead mistress upon the wreched inhabitants.

Well, one convention is as good as another; and all art is, in some sense, conventional; but the admission of a convention is no automatic dispensation for a whole family of clichés hiding under its skirts. A good number of Miss Taylor's characterizations (the Drinker, the buxom hostess at the village pub, the somewhat drugged sweetness of the governess herself) are unworthy of the freshness which we find in her language. She is keen enough with minutiae: one feels confident that she could use the same wit on her larger scaffolding. If she does so in her next piece, we shall have a first-rate novel.

HENRY RAGO.

The Myth of the State. Ernst Cassirer. Yale. $3.75.

WHEN, in the spring of 1941, Yale University invited the scholar, Dr. Ernst Cassirer—then a refugee from Hitlerite Germany at Goeteborg, Sweden—to lecture as a visiting professor, they welcomed him as a learned historian of philosophy and as the author of books concerning the history of the problem of knowledge, the philosophers of the renaissance epoch and the enlightenment philosophy. But the German refugee professor was also a constructive philosopher. His three volumes entitled "Philosophy of Symbolic Forms"—never translated into English and scarcely accessible on this side of the Atlantic—had been widely discussed in German academic circles during the twenties and thirties. Cassirer was called "the last man of the enlightenment period"; irrationalism was then in vogue, as were Bergsonianism and "existence philosophy"; rationalism was regarded as old fashioned. But in the United States the enlightenment philosophy was still in high esteeem when the visiting professor arrived, and both colleagues and students at Yale were enthusiastic about Cassirer's rationalistic treatment of what he called the "pre-logical" trends of the human mind. He published, in English, two concise books about symbols and myths: "Essay on Man" (Yale University Press, 1944) and "Language and Myths" (Harper, 1945).

The eighteenth century enlightenment philosophers had despised the "ignorance" of the myths. Cassirer, the modern enlightenment philosopher, claimed that the figurative ideas of the myths are inferior to rational philosophy but, nevertheless, worthwhile to be explored as precedents to factual knowledge and the triumph of reason. It never occurred to this rationalist that expressing truth in "symbolical forms" may be not only pre-logical, but sometimes also supra-logical. To Cassirer mythical thinking is obsolete; the power of the metaphor seems to him legitimate only in the imaginary realm of the arts. The myths are to be checked and subdued by the more progressive forces of reason. If rational control of human life loses its supremacy, the "chaos" of mythical thought endangers anew the achievements of man's cultural and social life.

Against this background of his philosophy Cassirer has analyzed the "Myth of the State" in his last book, which he finished only a few days before his sudden death on April 13, 1945. His posthumous manuscript has been edited and translated from the German by his colleague, Charles W. Hendel. The learned old refugee who had experienced the rude terror of Hitlerism discusses the mythical and the rational elements in the theories of state, from Plato's "Republic" to Rosenberg's "Myth of the 20th Century." His chapter on Machiavelli is especially informative. Another very interesting chapter deals with Gobineau's "Essai sur l'enégalité des races humaines," to Cassirer the prototype of unscientific "mythical" thinking, an unreasonable theory with a great emotional outlet. This wishful doctrine of race superiority, we are told, has awakened anew the demoniacal mythical powers of bygone "dark ages." Such conceptions are dangerous, Cassirer asserts, for in the critical moments of man's social life the rational forces that resist the rise of mythical thinking are no longer sure of themselves. "The political myths act in the same way as a serpent that tries to paralyze its victims before attacking them."

What can be done against the black magic of the totalitarian myths? They can certainly not be refuted by mere syllogisms. But our enlightenment philosopher thinks they can at least be weakened by the disclosure of their psychological background. Therefore, we should expose the origin, the structure, the methods and the technique of the political myths.

The reader of Cassirer needs "no special training in philosophy," as the book's publisher announces triumphantly. Fine. But is this posthumous book also profound? Does it give new insights? I very much doubt it. Where in the political world does Cassirer's either/or of mythical and rational conceptions really exist? It is arbitrary to discover the mythical element only in the doctrines of hero worship and race worship. The absolutism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has a strong mythical element. But as you find them in legitimate royalism, you can discover mythical elements also in the philosophy of the French Revolution. Even the Anglo-American ideas of political liberty are not so entirely rational as most people are convinced. The emotion which the belief in freedom infuses into its followers is an irrational element, called mythical in Cassirer's theory.

Even Marxian socialism, though posing as the non plus ultra of "scientific" theory, includes considerable mythical elements. Is the doctrine of the inevitability and desiderability of the proletarian class struggle less mythical than the "herrenvolk" theory? Are the surplus-value

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HOLY WEEK

is near at hand now. Readers may like to be reminded of three books written especially for it—supplements to the Holy Week Book, one might almost say, but on second thought, perhaps not quite.

Father Martindale's CREATIVE LOVE ($1.00) consists of the six readings he gave over the British radio in Holy Week last year. He had then just returned from Denmark, looking very like a corpse, and the readings came as something of a shock, showing as they do a mind and heart particularly young and alive. Many people say this is their favorite of all his books.

In THE HOUR OF BARABBAS by Otto Michael ($1.00) we are shown the Passion from the point of view of the gangster who was released so that our Lord might die. Barabbas is no more than an odd name to most of us, we forget that he was a real murderer with problems of his own and a soul to lose. But we are not likely to forget it again after meeting him in this book.

RADIO REPORTER IN JERUSALEM by Suzanne and Cita Malard ($1.50) is a play you may have heard over the radio. (It has been given many times and few things are more frightening.) But on the radio one always misses something: those who have heard it, as well as those who have not, may like to read for themselves what a reporter with a portable microphone makes of the terrible journey to Calvary.

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theory and the utopia of a future stateless society not myths? A political theory based only on rational thoughts could never be able to electrify the masses. Only the intensity of irrational hopes and desires has the power of attracting followers that are even ready to bring sacrifices for their political goals.

The rational as well as the symbolic forms in which the human mind finds its expressions are neither good nor bad by themselves. It is the metaphysical substance expressed in either way that leads man to God or seduces him into devilish aims. Indeed, not all myths are "demoniacal." There are myths that have elevated the ethical standard of mankind and others that spread corruption. To accuse just "the myth" as the scapegoat for evil political theories seems to this reviewer a very shallow and unrealistic philosophy.

MAX FISCHER.

The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus. Translated and edited by E. Allison Peers. Sheed, 3 vol. $15.00.

SAINT TERESA of Avila is now, with this handsome and economical edition, available to English-speaking readers as it is surely most good she should be. The Letters are not included in these three fine volumes, because the English edition of them produced by the Benedictines of Stanbrook covers them, Professor Peers says, excellently. The Spanish text is the critical edition of P. Silverio de Santa Teresa, C.D., with his notes abridged. The translation ("I have aimed at extreme literalness, and have seldom sacrificed this to smoothness and elegance of diction."), and the editing, with further brief notes and explanations ("with footnotes of an elucidatory rather than a piously discursive type"), are splendidly provided by E. Allison Peers, that amazing Anglican student of the Spanish Catholic Church. He thus accomplishes a remarkable companion work to his Complete Works of Saint John of the Cross.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

French Personalities and Problems: by D. W. Brogan. Knopf. $3.00.

DENIS BROGAN, a Glaswegian by birth, is presently Professor of Political Science at Cambridge. He is certainly one of the greatest living social historians, and has that infinitely rare gift, not merely of being able to taste and to appreciate the *bouquets,* the true inwardness, of other cultures than his own, but of being able to share that experience with his readers. No one who has read his book on *"The American Character"* will forget the wit and wisdom of his delineations, nor have better descriptions ever been given of the English Church and the English Public School System than in his volume on *"The English People."* But there are some people, who regarding Dr. Brogan as above all an expert (as he indeed is) in the field of Anglo-American relations, may have forgotten that he is, above all, what every Scotsman should be, at least atavistically: a passionate Francophile, and a serious student of French history and character. Dr. Brogan's fat volume of studies on nineteenth century France is required reading for every student in that field. Indeed, it is a pity that Messrs. Knopf do not mention on the dust-jacket of Dr. Brogan's new volume, this really great book, if out of print, it should not long remain so. And if this new, slightly unsatisfactory collection of wartime essays on France by Dr. Brogan does

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no more than send readers back to his earlier and more weighty tome, it will have performed a useful function.

For these studies, erudite and urbane though they are, yet are curiously lacking in nourishment. The sentiments are irreproachable, the irony admirable, the learning profound; but the total result is inconclusive. Nor is this only because all the essays except one were written while France was in bondage; and it is still painful even to recall those days. Nor is it because almost all were written for magazines, and so have an *ad hoc* flavor, and force upon the reader the delightful but distracting game of guessing for which of the periodicals courteously acknowledged they originally appeared. Nor is it, even, because to defend France to her lovers is as unnecessary as it is useless to those who do not share Dr. Brogan's faith that the *Gesta Dei per Francos* (and even the most drooling devotee of France may find that Dr. Brogan uses the phrase just once too often) are so much the greatest events that happened in the world and so much the best. No; the cause for the books' inadequacy lies deeper. There is, throughout, no argument, no thesis; facts are arrayed, are summarized, are marshalled, and then, like the good old King of Spain, Dr. Brogan marches them back again. At the book's end, the reader feels he has listened in to the most entertaining, profound and humorous of discussions, made by dons over their port in a college common-room. He has learnt much history; many important and little-known facts have been coaxed out of their corners into their proper perspective. But what's the score? No one expects book-reviews (which many of these essays originally were) to grind axes; nor character studies to be literary hammers; but even the patriotism that every civilized human being feels for France as their second country, is not enough. Still waters must, however deep, still run, or they will be as stagnant as shallow ones.

The best essays are on French nationalism: on Barrès and Maurras, on Bainville and the de Toqueville. The least good are the most contemporary, on De Gaulle and Darlan. It is very much to be hoped that, someday very soon, Dr. Brogan will write a history of "L'Affaire." A really monumental work, for only he could do it, and how superbly he.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

The Limitist. Fred L. Raymond. Norton. $2.00.

FEW AMERICAN public men would openly oppose the idea of wide distribution. The material gifts of creation—and what is made of them—are intended for the well-being of all mankind. Conflicts arise on two levels. On the theoretical there is the claim that American capitalism has brought about the widest distribution of wealth ever actually achieved; on the practical level there are the individuals, businesses and governments whose self-interested actions directly prevent the effective distribution of wealth, power and responsibility which is so desirable.

Mr. Raymond fancies himself a conservative, being adamantly opposed to the concentration of power inherent in socialism (also in giant capitalism and in the "giant labor union"); proliferation of small new businesses is one of the bases of his method of protecting and revivifying the system of private enterprise. As an introduction he assays the anti-trust laws, income and inheritance taxes and other regulatory devices now in force and finds them

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This remarkable work is a series of conferences on the Passion. Being addressed to young children, it is written in a style of utmost simplicity, in language not beyond the grasp of an eight-year-old child. Yet the ideas and aspirations are at times lofty and supernatural.

The detailed account of our Lord's physical sufferings would indeed beget an attitude of human compassion; but more than this is needed if meditation on the Passion is to elicit in us a sorrow for our sins. We must view those sufferings as something caused by our offenses, as the price of our redemption.

All priests and trained catechists are able to expound this Christian doctrine to adults, but many of them feel thwarted when attempting to explain it to children. At an early age children must be taught the evil of sin. For them no less than for grown-ups, an effective help in establishing a supernatural motive of contrition is the association of sin with the sufferings of Christ. The connection is insistently and impressively set forth in WITH JESUS SUFFERING.

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completely wanting. The sweeping character of this otherwise sound criticism proves to be the weakest sector of his argument.

Some of his most interesting pages show by what techniques, under the present set-up, big corporations prove an immovable obstacle to the launching of new products and of new small enterprises; how big business interests put small firms out of business, and how the big chain stores disrupt the local business scene. He acutely questions the efficiency of giant chain store systems, manufacturing chains and vast producing-distributing American industrial empires. It can be convincingly demonstrated that small chains can purchase about as cheaply as the largest, besides operating without the economic wastes which inevitably accompany giantism. (The co-ops have proved that.)

This author-manufacturer, who has been mulling over his scheme for 20 years, would enact two laws: one to set specified limits to big business activities, the other to curb the large-scale farmer. The first would restrict giant enterprise and multiple places of business under single control. No chain store systems, for instance, would be allowed to have more than 1,000 employees. No manufacturer would be allowed to have a stranglehold over the dealers which distribute his products. The use of widely scattered warehouses and shipping points by a single company would be forbidden. Only local concentration would be permitted. Sales of farm products by a single company or individual would be limited to specified amounts carefully determined for each commodity, etc., etc.

"The Limitist" is too small a book to go fully into the complexities which would devolve upon such a scheme. But it does suggest a legislative technique well worth exhaustive scrutiny. Mr. Raymond does say enough to indicate that he is well aware of the practical difficulties and his answer to them. He urges others to take up and improve his idea.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

The Iron Pastoral. By John Frederick Nims. Sloane. $2.50.

THERE ARE several things to be grateful for in these poems by John Frederick Nims. One is a blunting of the social and mental pieties of contemporary poetry. The concern is there—with death and danger, with the evasions and frauds of this hunted world—but it is not too fashionably spoken. I think Nims has too much of an eye for existence to enjoy playing mental metrics and too much humor to let himself be caught up in the self-conscious arrogance of some of the metropolitan poets.

I also like Nims's energy. He is in a great hurry with his images sometimes. They load and clog his lines. But he sees. He has a direct and masculine delight in the facts and details around him. He writes about the "Penny Arcade," where "the clerk controls the air gun's poodle puff," and "Magazine Stand," "Mont-Saint-Michel of pulp on every corner," or "Movie" with

> Our saints: the bawd and fatso. In fake night
> They mince and quiver in the choirs of light.

Nims finds "shallow nature" in an "All-Nite Lunchroom," "trouble deeper than peace" on a "Rainy Night" in the city. He finds his anachronisms in the raw paintings of the world.

Over against the merging colors and the facts, the clutter, Nims puts clarity, austerity, "the lean razor tongue" of truth, and "The masculine hand of God who never dreams."

He borrows in his style from Gerard Manley Hopkins, not always too successfully. For example—in "The Blonde Sonata"—"Effeminate man . . . plans all and nothing anvils."

Another kind of stylistic compression comes from his own good qualities of smartness and bluntness, but sometimes, it seems to me, they serve him poorly. Here is a quotation from "Two Sunday Poems":

> "The pewfolk shout eleison,
> Shun Satan or hurl halle-
> Lujah to fit-for-barber
> Cloudy sonorous god."

It may be my ignorance, but "fit-for-barber" is beyond me.

When all credit has been given these poems, for their irony, their masculinity, their awareness, one wishes that they could break away from their pile of symbols and images, for the end result is confusion. Since confusion is symptomatic of our lives we may not be able to avoid using it, but poetry should not inherit it. Reality, and a talent for dealing with it, is not quite enough of a combination to make poems.

Paul Valery once made a statement which has some bearing on what I mean: "Je déteste la fausse profondeur mais je n'aime pas trop la véritable. La profondeur littéraire est le fruit d'un procédé spécial. C'est un effet comme un autre, obtenu par un procédé comme un autre. . . .

Et qu'importe que ce bassin ait quarante centimètres de profondeur ou quatre mille mètres? C'est son éclat qui nous enchante."

JOHN HAY.

Not With the Fist. Ruth D. Tuck. Harcourt. $3.00.

"NOT WITH the fist," but "with a careless elbow," is Miss Tuck's rather generous verdict, after a lengthy hearing, on the unplanned maltreatment of Mexican-Americans by the "Anglo" Southwest.

Fist or elbow, the damage is great, as she demonstrates—again, not with flailing fist but by taking a firm grasp of the facts and laying them out before the reader. This she does without graphs or tables. She tells the story of a typical town, which she calls Descanso (San Bernardino?), and some of its typical Spanish-speaking citizens. Not that any town or family *is* quite typical, as Miss Tuck is the first to admit; the situation of the Mexican-American, as she calls him, varies considerably from place to place, even from house to house.

This much recognized, her technique is justified by its readable results. Her facts include such remote but real influences as the Diaz régime and succeeding revolution in Mexico, together with the aggressive character of Descanso's "American" settlers; such more recent factors as the desire for cheap labor on the railroads and farms; and, finally, the "Mexican" soldier-heroes home from the war with new ambitions.

The author's interpretation and weighting of these multiple influences demonstrate her courage, intelligence, and balance. She is outspoken in placing blame where she thinks it belongs but never one-sided or sentimental in taking the part of the minority. There is sympathy for both sides in her judgments.

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This study should interest any American. What Yanqui may refuse further light on Latin Americans? If he absolves himself from that obligation, there will be some other minority in his neck of the land to which Miss Tuck's generic observations are applicable. Above all, the book will be valuable (if read) for those to whom it is primarily addressed: "those who work directly with Mexican-Americans"—employers, teachers, public officials, clergy, social workers, labor organizers, and the like. Also for less official southwesterners, whose attitudes and conduct can halve the effectiveness of the most enlightened official programs. Here are excellent substitutes for our prejudices. The way toward harmony-in-diversity (not uniformity) will be long and hard in any case. It must be negotiated. We must escape this lesser dilemma, along with the white-Negro contradiction. We cannot continue to profess democracy (and Christianity) while adhering in action to a caste system and condemning perhaps a couple of million fellow Americans to second-class citizenship.

The Catholic reader might question the passages dealing with the Church's influence. These passages are not extensive. The author explains that the Church's direct social influence has not itself been extensive. Her appreciation of the Church's strictly spiritual objectives is, not unexpectedly, dim. Even here, one would conclude after reading this account, the record is not too happy. Yet there have been heroic churchmen who salvaged thousands of souls. And Miss Tuck might have noted the chief reasons for our failure in the Southwest to keep up with the influx from Mexico—simply lack of priests and poverty.

That the Church, with growing but still inadequate resources, is now seeking the spiritual and temporal welfare of her Spanish-speaking children with renewed vigor, is a fact of which the author has some slight awareness. At the worst, Miss Tuck's few strictures on the Catholic record are not important defects in an excellent piece of research and writing. We all have a tremendous job to do in the Southwest and should welcome the light this book throws on our task. J. M. HAYES.

Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House. Eric Hodgins. Illustrated by William Steig. S. & S. $2.75.

THIS IS AN extremely amusing account of all the troubles Mr. Blandings ran into when he and his wife bought an old farm and tried to construct for themselves the sort of home they had always thought they wanted. The failings of the law, of architects, of builders and of a host of sundry other human beings involved, not omitting Mr. and Mrs. B. themselves, are depicted with remarkable fidelity to life as well as keen wit and humor.

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